

Haig trip

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T O P S E C R E T SENSITIVE 260530Z MAY 70

FROM: GENERAL HAIG, SAIGON 657

TO: THE WHITE HOUSE, EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY DR. KISSINGER

ATTACHED IS A NEAR VERBATIM ACCOUNT OF MY MEETING WITH MATAK.  
I AM AGAIN FORWARDING THE FULL TEXT TO INSURE NO NUANCE HAS BEEN  
LOST ALONG THE WAY.

YOU WILL NOTE THAT MATAK DEMONSTRATES A LEVEL OF  
CONFIDENCE, SOPHISTICATION AND PRACTIBILITY LACKING IN LON NOL.  
HE IS APPARENTLY THE MOVING FORCE IN THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT  
THOUGH HE APPEARS FOR THE PRESENT TO BE WILLING TO GIVE FULL  
DEFERENCE TO LON NOLS NUMBER ONE POSITION.

YOU WILL NOTE THAT MATAK HAS ACCEPTED THE VALUE OF CONTINUING  
WITH AN OSTENSIBLY NEUTRAL STANCE FOR CAMBODIA. HE ALSO FEELS AS  
DO I THAT THIS POSTURE MAY NOT SURVIVE AND THAT FLEXIBILITY  
SHOULD BE RETAINED ON THIS ISSUE IN THE LONGER TERM.

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ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

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GENERAL HAIG - SIRIK MATAK INTERVIEW  
AT THE RESIDENCE OF SIRIK MATAK,  
PHNOM PENH, 1800 HOURS, 23 MAY 1970.

PARTICIPANTS: SIRIK MATAK

B GEN. A. M. HAIG

LLOYD M. RIVES, CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I.

MAJOR TOOLE

GENERAL HAIG: I WOULD LIKE TO ELUCIDATE FOR YOU THE VIEWS OF  
PRESIDENT NIXON ON THE CHANGING CONFLICT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. THIS  
MORNING I HAD A LONG, FRUITFUL TALK WITH GENERAL LON NOL IN WHICH  
I RECOUNTED THE KINDS OF SHORT TERM ASSISTANCE PRESIDENT NIXON  
HOPES TO BE ABLE TO PROVIDE YOUR COUNTRY. DURING THIS  
CONVERSATION, THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO PROVIDED ME WITH THE BENEFIT  
OF YOUR GOVERNMENT'S THINKING IN THIS AREA. MY GOVERNMENT WILL  
NOW LOOK INTO YOUR NEEDS FOR MATERIEL AND MAY BE ABLE TO ASSIST  
WITH SOME. SOME I AM SURE WILL PROVE IMPRACTICAL. IT SEEMS TO ME  
TO BE AN IMPORTANT STEP FOR YOUR PLANS THAT WE UNDERTAKE AN  
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM WHICH IS REALISTIC IN SCOPE, WILL HAVE AN

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IMMEDIATE EFFECT AND WILL NOT BY ITS VERY NATURE DEPRIVE US OF THE KIND OF LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT AT HOME NEEDED TO MOUNT AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAM.

SIRIK MATAK: I AM VERY HAPPY THAT YOU HAVE COME TO TALK. OF COURSE, YOU RECEIVED THE PRECISE DETAILS OF THE CURRENT MILITARY SITUATION EARLIER TODAY. IT IS NOT IN MY FIELD TO DISCUSS THIS. HOWEVER, I CAN SAY THAT IN GENERAL, WE HAVE AN URGENT NEED FOR AN ARMED FORCE, A FORCE ARMED SUFFICIENT TO OUST THE ENEMY FROM OUR TERRITORY. WE HAD ONLY A VERY SMALL ARMY, 30,000 MEN. JUST ENOUGH REALLY TO EFFECTIVELY CONTROL THE POPULATION. HOWEVER, IT WAS NOT AT ALL CAPABLE OF COMBATTING ANOTHER NATION. THIS SITUATION IN MY OPINION WAS INTENTIONALLY PREPARED BY SIHANOUK AND DATES BACK FROM THE MOMENT THAT RELATIONS WERE BROKEN BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. FROM THAT POINT ON, SIHANOUK PREFERRED TO COLLABORATE WITH THE ENEMY AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR ARMY WAS GREATLY IMPAIRED. ALSO, PLEASE INFORM PRESIDENT NIXON THAT SIHANOUK IS FINISHED IN CAMBODIA AND IS NOW RESIDING WITH HIS FRIENDS.

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GENERAL HAIG: ALL THIS HAS BEEN EVIDENT TO US BUT I WONDER WHETHER SIHANOUK IS SOMEWHAT LESS OF AN HONORED GUEST IN PEKING THAN HE WOULD HAVE PREFERRED TO BE.

SIRIK MATAK: UNQUESTIONABLY. WE LISTEN TO RADIO PEKING AND WHAT HE IS NOW SAYING IS NOT IN HIS STYLE. IT IS NOT SIHANOUK WHO SPEAKS. WE ARE CONVINCED THAT HE IS INDEED A CAPTIVE OF MAO TSE-TUNG.

GENERAL HAIG: I SUGGESTED TO GENERAL LON NOL THIS MORNING THAT NOW THAT THE ENEMY HAS BEEN FORCED TO OPERATE SO FAR FROM HIS BASES OF SUPPLY, HE IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY VULNERABLE. I SPOKE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF PREVENTING THE ENEMY FROM "SWIMMING IN THE SEA OF THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE". YOU MUST NURTURE AND STRENGTHEN THE WILL OF THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE TO RESIST. I WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU COULD GIVE ME YOUR THOUGHTS ON THIS MATTER.

SIRIK MATAK: I CAN SAY THAT WE FORESAW THE COMMUNISTS' MOVEMENT INTO THE HEART OF CAMBODIA. WITH THEIR VITAL CACHES OVERRUN, WE KNEW THAT THEY HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO COME THIS WAY. BUT NOW THEY

DO NOT CARRY HEAVY ARMS. THEY MANEUVER IN SMALL GROUPS OF UP TO 30 MEN AND WE TOO ARE OFTEN FORCED TO FIGHT "GUERRILLA WAR" AGAINST THEM. BUT IT IS ONLY A QUESTION OF TIME BEFORE WE ORGANIZE OURSELVES AND OUST THEM. THE DECISION OF PRESIDENT NIXON TO ATTACK THE SANCTUARIES HAS IMMENSELY AIDED CAMBODIA AND ELIMINATED A GREAT DANGER FOR THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE. HOWEVER, THE VC/NVA REMAIN VERY STRONG AND VERY MOBILE. IF WE COULD HAVE AN ARMY STRONG ENOUGH, WE COULD HELP OURSELVES AND HELP OUR FRIENDS BY BEATING THE COMMUNISTS. OUR POPULATION IS HEALTHY AND IT UNDERSTANDS THE STUPID MISTAKES THAT THE ENEMY HAS MADE. OUR PEOPLE ARE JUST NOW REALIZING THE ROLE THAT SIHANOUK PLAYED IN ALL THIS. THEY HAVE LEARNED THAT YOU CANNOT WORK OUT AN "ARRANGEMENT" WITH COMMUNISTS. THERE CAN NEVER BE A DEAL THAT WILL LAST.

GENERAL HAIG: THIS MORNING THE QUESTION OF JOINING A BLOCK OF NATIONS LIKE SEATO AROSE AND I DISCOURAGED THIS FOR THE TIME BEING. I BELIEVE YOU SHOULD RETAIN YOUR FLEXIBILITY UNTIL THE ENEMY'S INTENTIONS BECOME MORE CLEAR AND THE SITUATION ITSELF CLARIFIES. IF THE SITUATION STABILIZES, HOPEFULLY WE CAN PREVENT FURTHER ESCALATION OF THE CONFLICT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. FROM AN

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE CAMBODIA'S NEUTRALITY STILL APPEARS TO OFFER THE BEST HOPE FOR A NEGOTIATED FORMULA WHICH WILL BEST SERVE THE INTERESTS OF YOUR PEOPLE, HOWEVER, THIS COULD CHANGE WITH TIME.

SIRIK MATAK: FOR NOW, I CAN ASSURE THE PRESIDENT THAT WE WISH TO SEEK NEUTRALITY BUT WE ALSO WANT TO STRENGTHEN THIS NEUTRALITY. BUT IF THE DAY SHOULD COME WHEN THE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA REACHES A STATE OF EMERGENCY, WE WILL CONSULT AGAIN WITH THE UNITED STATES ON THIS QUESTION.

GENERAL HAIG: THIS MORNING, GENERAL LON NOL EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN ABOUT YOUR RELATIONS WITH THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE.

SIRIK MATAK: WHEN THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE FIRST CAME TO RID US OF OUR COMMON ENEMY, WE GREETED THEM WITH OPEN ARMS, BUT THEN THERE WERE A FEW SAIGON PERSONALITIES WHO UTTERED SOME TROUBLESOME REMARKS. DESPITE THIS UNFORTUNATE EXPERIENCE, WE HAVE AGREED TO FORGET THE PAST. THIS IS NOT ALWAYS TRUE, HOWEVER, FOR SOME INDIVIDUAL CITIZENS. THUS THE POTENTIAL FOR TROUBLE EXISTS.

PERMIT ME TO SPEAK MORE ON THIS PROBLEM. WHEN THE VC/NVA FIRST MOVED OUT OF THE SANCTUARIES THEY WOULD ENTER A VILLAGE AND ATTEMPT TO CONSCRIPT ALL THE VIETNAMESE MALES. THOSE WHO REFUSED TO SERVE WERE KILLED. FOR THIS REASON, WE HAVE HAD TO ISOLATE THE VIETNAMESE. MANY WANT ALSO TO RETURN TO SOUTH VIETNAM. THE SAIGON GOVERNMENT HAS A DELEGATION IN PHNOM PENH AND WE ARE WORKING ON SOLVING THIS PROBLEM IN CONSONANCE. IT IS EVIDENT THAT THERE ARE MANY VC AMONG THOSE WHO ARE TO BE RETURNED. THE WHOLE PROBLEM HAS RAISED CERTAIN EMOTIONS. DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE UNTIMELY DECLARATIONS FROM SAIGON HAVE BEEN ISOLATED, IN THE MINDS OF MANY CAMBODIANS A VIETNAMESE REMAINS A VIETNAMESE AND OLD ENMITIES REMAIN. HERE IN PHNOM PENH WE GROUP THE VIETNAMESE INHABITANTS FOR THEIR OWN PROTECTION BUT THE VC/NVA STILL INFILTRATE INTO THESE GROUPS AT NIGHT. THUS THE PROBLEM IS REAL. FOR THIS REASON WE WONDERED IF IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE TO CREATE MIXED UNITS OF US AND CAMBODIANS FIGHTING SIDE BY SIDE. OR POSSIBLY OBTAIN MORE KHMERS FROM SOUTH VIETNAM RATHER THAN RELY COMPLETELY ON SOUTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS AS OUR LIBERATORS.

GENERAL HAIG: THE US WILL LEAVE CAMBODIA BY THE 30TH OF JUNE. THE PRESIDENT HAS PROMISED OUR PEOPLE THAT THIS WILL BE DONE AND FAILURE TO MEET THIS COMMITMENT COULD JEOPARDIZE OUR ABILITY TO UNDERTAKE OTHER EQUALLY IMPORTANT MEASURES IN SUPPORT OF YOUR GOVERNMENT. THIS MORNING I TALKED TO GENERAL LON NOL ABOUT THE FUTURE OPERATIONS OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE ARMY IN CAMBODIA. I LISTED TWO DESIRABLE GUIDELINES WHICH WE WOULD HOPE GOVERN THEIR OPERATIONS. AS A RESULT OF MY OBSERVATIONS HERE I WOULD ADD A THIRD. THE DESIRABLE GUIDELINES ARE:

1. CONTINUE AFTER JUNE 30 SHALLOW PENETRATIONS IN ORDER TO PREVENT ENEMY FROM RECONSTRUCTING HIS BASE AREAS ALONG THE FRONTIERS.

2. FUTURE SOUTH VIETNAMESE ATTACKS ON THE VC/NVA IN CAMBODIA SHOULD NOT BE SO DEEP AS TO SERVE AS A PRETEXT WHICH THE ENEMY COULD USE INTERNATIONALLY AS JUSTIFICATION FOR EVEN MORE SERIOUS ATTACKS AGAINST CAMBODIA. IN OTHER WORDS, WE WOULD HOPE THAT THE GVN'S POSTURE IN CAMBODIA WOULD DETER ENEMY ATTACKS AGAINST YOUR PEOPLE; NOT SERVE TO ENCOURAGE THEM.

3. FINALLY, I WOULD SUGGEST THIS NEW GUIDELINE AS A RESULT OF MY TALKS HERE. FUTURE SOUTH VIETNAMESE OPERATIONS IN CAMBODIA



SHOULD BE CONDUCTED IN A MANNER THAT WILL NOT PROVIDE THE ENEMY A BASIS FOR CREATING A "CAUSE CELEBRE" WHICH THE ENEMY COULD EXPLOIT AS A GRIEVANCE TO ALIENATE THE KHMER PEOPLE FROM THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. THIS OF COURSE, PRESUPPOSES RESTRICTIONS ON THE DEPTH AND EXTENT OF ARVN OPERATIONS AS WELL AS A RIGID CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THEIR PERFORMANCE.

SIRIK MATAK: THAT IS ABSOLUTELY RIGHT. I AGREE COMPLETELY. WE HAVE NOTICED THAT WHEN THE ENEMY ATTACKS THEY ARE BOTH MOBILE AND WELL ARMED. I DO NOT NORMALLY BECOME INVOLVED IN MILITARY MATTERS BUT WOULD NOT THE BEST TACTICAL APPROACH BE TO COME IN FROM BEHIND THE ENEMY AND PUSH THEM BACK TOWARD THE VN FRONTIER. (LAUGHTER.) I THANK THE GENERAL FOR HELPING US. WE ARE A SMALL COUNTRY BUT WE WILL FIGHT. IT'S THE VC/NVA WHO ARE THE AGGRESSORS AND CERTAINLY NOT THE UNITED STATES. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER OR NOT YOU KNOW TH LATEST INTENTIONS OF THE ENEMY, BUT THEY SEEM TO BE MOVING A SIZABLE FORCE TOWARD PHUM KOMPONG THOM AND IF THEY TAKE THIS TOWN THEY ARE ONLY A SHORT DISTANCE FROM

TONLE SAP, THE LAKE AREA WHERE THERE ARE 15,000-20,000 VIETNAMESE FISHERMEN. THEY ALSO MAY HAVE THE

INTENTION TO SWING NORTH INTO THAILAND.

GENERAL HAIG: WOULD US AIR ATTACKS IN NORTHEASTERN CAMBODIA SERVE TO RELIEVE SOME OF THIS PRESSURE?

SIRIK MATAK: WE WOULD WARMLY WELCOME SUCH ATTACKS. THE ENEMY'S OLD PLAN WAS TO OCCUPY THAT PORTION OF THE COUNTRY AND INSTALL SIHANOUK. THIS PART OF OUR COUNTRY IS SPARSELY POPULATED AND IT WOULD BE A GREAT BENEFIT TO DISRUPT THE ENEMY'S EFFORTS TO REESTABLISH HIS BASES AND LINES OF COMMUNICATION IN THE NORTH-EAST.

GENERAL HAIG: WE HOPE TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE THE KINDS OF EQUIPMENT MOST URGENTLY NEEDED, RIFLES, GRENADES, MACHINE GUNS, MORTARS, ETC. IN THIS PHASE WE WILL NOT GO BEYOND THIS LEVEL OF SOPHISTICATION. IT WOULD BE DISHONEST AND SELF-DEFEATING FOR ME TO SUGGEST OTHER ASSISTANCE IS POSSIBLE. ACTUALLY THESE ARE THE KINDS OF EQUIPMENT WHICH WILL HAVE THE MOST SIGNIFICANT SHORT TERM EFFECT.

SIRIK MATAK: I'LL LEAVE THE DECISION OF WHAT YOU PROVIDE TO THE GENERAL'S AND TO PRESIDENT NIXON'S DISCRETION. WE HAVE MADE OUR REQUESTS AND DEMANDS. I'LL LEAVE IT TO YOU TO DETERMINE WHAT YOU WILL PROVIDE IMMEDIATELY AND WHAT YOU WILL DELAY FOR LATER CONSIDERATION.

GENERAL HAIG: WE WILL ALSO DO OUR UTMOST TO ASSIST IN MAKING OPERABLE THE T-28 AIRCRAFT THAT YOU NOW POSSESS.

MR. RIVES: A TEAM FROM BANGKOK ARRIVES FOR THIS PURPOSE ON MONDAY.

SIRIK MATAK: MONDAY, ALSO, THE PRIME MINISTER OF THAILAND ARRIVES FOR AN OFFICIAL VISIT. WE NOTICE THAT THE THAI GOVERNMENT IS VERY WORRIED ABOUT THE CAMBODIAN SITUATION.

MR. RIVES: THAT'S VERY GOOD THAT HE'S COMING. IT SHOULD BE AN EXCELLENT PRESIGE FACTOR.

SIRIK MATAK: IT WILL BE A VERY SHORT, INITIAL VISIT. MAY I ASK

A QUESTION. ARE YOU STILL CONSIDERING A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THIS CONFLICT?

GENERAL HAIG: I THINK RECENT OPERATIONS CONFIRM THAT HANOI IS FAR WEAKER THAN MANY REALIZED. IN ASSESSING THEIR REACTIONS TO OUR ATTACK ON THEIR SANCTUARIES, TWO PHENOMENA ARE SIGNIFICANT: FIRST, THEY OFFERED NO DEFENSE IN THE SANCTUARIES THEMSELVES DESPITE EVIDENCE THAT THEY HAD BEEN ORDERED TO DO SO. SECONDLY, THERE HAVE BEEN FEW ENEMY COUNTER ACTIONS. ALL THIS SUGGESTS A FUNDAMENTAL WEAKNESS IN THEIR POSTURE. THUS, IN THE LONG RUN, I FEEL THAT HANOI MUST SERIOUSLY CONSIDER A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION. WE FREQUENTLY ARE GUILTY OF OVERESTIMATING AS WELL AS UNDERESTIMATING THE ENEMY. I AM SURE HANOI HAS ALSO NOTED WITH CONCERN THAT THE ARVN HAS BECOME EVERY BIT A MATCH FOR THEIR MAIN FORCES. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT FACTOR HOWEVER HAS BEEN HANOI'S INABILITY TO GENERATE COUNTER ACTIONS BY THEIR GUERRILLAS IN SOUTH VIETNAM ESPECIALLY IN THE SOUTHERN THREE CORPS AREAS. THIS CERTAINLY TENDS TO CONFIRM THAT HIS PARAMILITARY AND POLITICAL BASE HAS BEEN SEVERLY ERODED IN RECENT MONTHS. WE HAVE NOTED A SHARP AND DISTINCT DROP OFF IN HIS ATTACKS. THE PATTERN HAS BEEN

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CONSISTANT IN ALL SOUTH SOUTH VIETNAM. FURTHERMORE, AS I POINTED OUT EARLIER, THEIR MAIN FORCE HAS NOW BEEN SPLIT AWAY FROM THEIR INFRASTRUCTURE AND THEIR POLITICAL CADRES. THEY ARE NOW EMBARKED ON A BOLD AND HIGHLY RISKY ENTERPRISE IN YOUR COUNTRY WITHOUT HAVING BEEN ABLE TO PREPARE THE BATTLEFIELD WITH PRELIMINARY POLITICAL ACTION OR THE LOGISTICAL PREPARATIONS WHICH HAVE ALWAYS CHARACTERIZED THEIR OPERATIONS. NORMALLY THEY PRE-POSITION SUPPLIES AND PREPARE THE BATTLEFIELD WITH POLITICAL ACTIONS BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH THEIR CONVENTIONAL MAIN FORCE ATTACKS. THUS, I ANTICIPATE THESE ATTACKS IN YOUR COUNTRY WILL BECOME PROGRESSIVELY WEAKER. THIS ALSO DRAMATIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING THE RESOLVE AND WILL TO RESIST IN YOUR PEOPLE. INDEED, FOR THE FIRST TIME HANOI COULD ITSELF BECOME THE VICTIM OF GUERRILLA WARFARE. THIS TIME AGAINST ITS EXTENDED MAIN FORCES BY THE PEOPLE OF CAMBODIA WHO ARE FIGHTING FOR THEIR LIBERTY.

SIRIK MATAK: IF WE HAPPEN TO BEAT THEM, TO CRUSH THEM, THAT WOULD FORCE THEM TO NEGOTIATE. WE WILL NOT NEGOTIATE WITHOUT THEIR COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL FROM OUR COUNTRY. THE GENEVA AGREEMENT IS OUR BASIS TO EXIST. WE MUST HAVE IT RESPECTED.

GENERAL NOL HAS ALREADY SUBMITTED OUR REQUESTS. PERMIT ME

TO BE OPTIMISTIC THAT PRESIDENT NIXON WILL HELP US.

I WAS VERY SORRY TO HEAR ABOUT THE US TROUBLES AFTER THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF YOUR INTERVENTION. THE UNITED STATES CITIZENS MUST UNDERSTAND THAT THE US IS NOT THE AGGRESSOR.

GENERAL HAIG: I THINK THAT THE GREAT MAJORITY OF AMERICANS UNDERSTAND THIS BUT SINCE WE HAVE A DEMOCRACY THERE WILL ALWAYS BE THE EXERCISE OF DISSENT.

SIRIK MATAK: I WAS VERY HAPPY ABOUT NEW YORK WHERE YOUR WORKERS RALLIED TO THE SUPPORT OF PRESIDENT NIXON.

GENERAL HAIG: THESE ARE OUR WORKING PEOPLE WHO HAVE AN EQUITY IN WHAT OUR COUNTRY HAS BUILT. STUDENTS HAVE LITTLE INVESTMENT IN OUR COUNTRY AT THIS STAGE IN THEIR LIVES. IT IS ONLY NATURAL THAT THEY ARE ABLE TO TAKE A MORE RADICAL VIEWPOINT.

SIRIK MATAK: YOU ALSO HAVE A FEW SENATORS.

GENERAL HAIG: PERHAPS THEY ARE MOST CONCERNED WITH FUTURE VOTES AND LESS INCLINED TO FEEL THE RESPONSIBILITIES THAT ONLY OUR PRESIDENT MUST SHOULDER.

SIRIK MATAK: I THINK THAT FOR MANSFIELD AND FULBRIGHT THE IMAGE OF SIHANOUK OR RATHER THE IMAGE SIHANOUK PROJECTED OF THIS COUNTRY STILL REMAINS. THIS IS A FALSE PICTURE. WE ARE NOT A PEACEFUL OASIS IN THIS WARTORN PENINSULA. OUR SOLDIERS WERE BEING KILLED BY THE VC EVERY DAY LONG AGO BUT IT WAS NOT PUBLICIZED. WE MERELY CLOSED OUR EYES WHILE THE FABRIC OF OUR COUNTRY WAS BEING DESTROYED UNDER SIHANOUK'S POLICIES.

GENERAL HAIG: I HEARD THAT WHEN YOUR CITIZENS ENTERED THE PRG EMBASSY THAT DOCUMENTS WERE FOUND THAT CONFIRMED THAT SIHANOUK WAS ULTIMATELY HIMSELF A TARGET FOR ELIMINATION.

SIRIK MATAK: YES, THESE DOCUMENTS WERE FOUND IN THE NORTH VIETNAMESE EMBASSY. THEY PLANNED TO KEEP SIHANOUK AS LONG AS HE WAS USEFUL TO THEM, AND THEN TO LIQUIDATE HIM.

GENERAL HAIG: SENATOR MANSFIELD AND SIHANOUK SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THIS.

SIRIK MATAK: WE TRIED TO TAKE THESE DOCUMENTS TO SIHANOUK BUT HE REFUSED TO LOOK AT THEM. HE BURNT ALL HIS BRIDGES TO EMBRACE THE COMMUNISTS. IT'S TOO LATE FOR HIM. THERE ARE STILL SOME OLDER PEOPLE WHO REGRET HIS DEPARTURE. BUT THEY ARE FEWER AND FEWER AS THEY LEARN OF HIS TREACHERY.

I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE THE AMBASSADOR TO CHINA FOR TWO YEARS AND I TRIED TO WARN SIHANOUK THAT MAO PLANNED TO COMMUNIZE ALL OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. HE DIDN'T BELIEVE ME.

IN SPITE OF ALL OUR PROBLEMS, ALL THAT WE HAVE TALKED ABOUT, WE ARE ALL OPTIMISTIC.

GENERAL HAIG: HANOI HAS PROBLEMS OF ITS OWN WHICH IN MOST RESPECTS ARE FAR MORE DIFFICULT THAN OURS.

SIRIK MATAK: YOU KNOW I MET PHAM VAN DONG IN BERLIN AND WE HAD A FRIENDLY CHAT. HE CONSTANTLY DENIED THE PRESENCE OF NVA IN CAMBODIA. WE HAVE TRIED EVERYTHING TO GET RID OF THEM, EVEN APPROACHING



CHOU-EN-LAI BUT WITHOUT LUCK. THE KING OF THAILAND HAS SAID YOU CANNOT DEAL WITH THE COMMUNISTS. YOU CAN ONLY TALK TO THEM WITH WEAPONS. WHAT ARE YOUR NEXT PLANS.

GENERAL HAIG: I RETURN TO SAIGON TO TALK TO PRESIDENT THIEU AND GENERAL ABRAMS ON MONDAY. ON TUESDAY, I HOPE TO VISIT THE SANTUARIES ALONG YOUR BORDER AND ON WEDNESDAY RETURN TO WASHINGTON. I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY GRATITUDE FOR THIS CONSTRUCTIVE MEETING. I AM SURE IT WILL BE HELPFUL TO THE PRESIDENT TO HAVE A FIRST HAND REPORT OF THE SITUATION HERE AND AGAIN LET ME REAFFIRM HIS CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE.

SIRIK MATAK: PERMIT ME TO COUNT ON HIS SUPPORT. YOU ARE THE LEADERS OF LIBERTY, I AM CONFIDENT YOU WILL HELP US, A SMALL COUNTRY. ONE DAY WHEN THINGS HAVE CALMED DOWN IN CAMBODIA, I HOPE TO VISIT THE UNITED STATES AND THANK PRESIDENT NIXON IN PERSON.

GENERAL HAIG: I AM SURE YOU WILL BE WELCOME. HAVE YOU MET THE PRESIDENT?

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SIRIK MATAK: I MET HIM DURING HIS VISIT IN 1953 WHEN HE WAS VICE PRESIDENT. I HAPPENED TO BE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AT THE TIME.

GENERAL HAIG: DO YOU RECALL DR. KISSINGER AS WELL?

SIRIK MATAK: YES, I ESCORTED DR. KISSINGER AROUND THE COUNTRY. WE SPENT FIVE DAYS TOGETHER.

GENERAL HAIG: THE PRESIDENT RETAINS A SPECIAL PLACE IN HIS HEART FOR CAMBODIA.

MEETING ADJOURNED 7:45 PM